

an examination of Zola's remains was made, the doctors afterwards reporting that all the vital organs were sound, though the Hood was saturated with oxide of carbon.<sup>1</sup> This, it may be mentioned, fixes on the globule<sup>^</sup> of the blood, whence it expels all oxygen, thereby producing drowsiness, numbness, and at last a species of paralysis. Perhaps in Zola's case the blood-poisoning may not have been the only cause of death; for it is possible that he might have survived in spite of it, if, like his wife, he had been able to relieve himself, and if he had not fallen on the floor of the room, where the atmosphere, impregnated with carbonic acid gas, may have been almost unbreathable. However, the experts virtually agreed in ascribing the death to the poisoning of the blood by carbonic oxide.

Madame Zola remained at Dr. Defaut's house for some days, regaining her strength very slowly. At first her husband's death was concealed from her; she believed that he was only ill like herself. But the sad truth had to be told, and then, after a violent explosion of grief, realising that she had duties to fulfil, she insisted on returning home in spite of her weakness. It was a terrible home-coming.

Her husband's body had been embalmed with more or less success — for signs of decomposition had set in directly after the post-mortem examination — and laid in its coffin, which

On the other hand, it throws out little if any smoke, and it is a significant circumstance that none was found in the "bedroom.

<sup>1</sup> The writer was in the house while the post-mortem examination was made, and to the best of his knowledge and "belief it lasted about forty minutes. In view of the stifling fits induced by a form of angina from which Zola had suffered periodically ever since 1875, it was strange to hear that all the organs were sound. It is not for the writer to engage in any discussion with medical men, but he cannot reconcile their report with the complaint from which Zola undoubtedly suffered.